DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 253 974 EA 017 563

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TITLE Issues in Educational Administration.
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 18p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrative Policy; Administrator Education; Administrator Evaluation; Administrator Role; *Educational Administration; *Educational Philosophy; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Merit Pay; *Policy Formation; Principals; Teacher Evaluation

ABSTRACT

School administrators need to study and analyze the pros and cons of issues before making decisions. Ultimately, decisions need to be made by administrators as to which philosophies of education to implement in resolving conflicting points of view. More research studies would lead to an increased number of syntheses of the pros and cons of certain issues. Seven of these issues are discussed: (1) diverse means of appraising teacher performance, (2) approaches in rewarding principals and supervisors; (3) ideographic (personal needs of participants) versus nomothetic (the school system) dimensions in school organization; (4) theory as compared to practice in graduate programs of school administration; (5) art versus science roles of administrators; (6) merit pay as compared to cooperative agreement on salaries of principals and supervisors; and (7) traits versus functional situations in assessing school administrators. Five references are provided. (MLF)

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TITLE: ISSUES IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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ISSUES IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Numerous issues are involved in arenas of administration of schools. Pros and cons are in evidence when appraising an issue. School administrators need to study and analyze inherent content in any significant issue. Ultimately decisions need to be made by administrators as to which philosophies of education to implement in resolving conflicting points of view.

Evaluation of Teacher Progress

A perennial problem of school administrators pertains to methods to be utilized in evaluating teaching performance. Behaviorists recommend that teacher effectiveness needs to be appraised in terms of measurably stated objectives achieved by students. The objectives are generally selected on a system wide basis. The precise ends are used as guidelines to select learning activities. After the activities have been implemented in teaching-learning situations, the teacher must observe if students individually have or have not attained the chosen ends. As more objectives are attained by students, increasingly the classroom teacher is rated as being a quality instructor. Observations generally come from student test results.

A second means of assessing teaching performance is to utilize a problem solving method. Cooperatively, teachers and the administrator identify and attempt to solve vital problems. The problems may pertain to discipline, a lack of teaching materials, or approaches in grouping students for instruction. Pupils guided by teachers may solve problems identified in diverse lessons and units of study.

A third way of appraising teaching and learning involves the teacher identifying personal problems involving the instructional arena. The teacher, not the administrator, selects concerns of classroom teaching. The administrator assists in guiding the teacher to select and solve weaknesses in the in-

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structional arena.

Administrators then need to make decisions pertaining to which method(s) are the best to utilize in improving instruction and the curriculum. A fourth method in appraising teacher performance may involve the utilization of checklists. Relevant criteria need to appear on the checklist. The teacher then is rated on a five point scale, such as excellent, very good, average, below average, and poor on each standard. These criteria, among others, may include the following: The teacher

(a) prepares well for teaching.
(b) uses stimulating methods of teaching.
(c) utilizes a variety of activities and experiences.
(d) provides for individual differences among students.
(e) appraises the total development of the learner.
(f) diagnoses and remedies student deficiencies in learning.

Pertaining to evaluating teacher performance, Oliva[1] wrote:

> Supervisors effect changes in instruction as they help teachers to evaluate themselves. The supervisor must master a variety of techniques for getting teachers to look at their own behavior. An external approach—the provision of opportunities for the teachers to analyze their own performances. Teacher evaluation systems should include three components: self-appraisal, formative evaluation during the year, and summative or annual evaluation.
>
> Competencies that school systems consider important enough to be evaluated tend to fall within two major categories: instructional skills and personal-professional attributes. Techniques for evaluating instructional skills include an examination of models of teaching, the use of selected training films, the utilization of protocol materials, the study of teacher-training modules, and the application of observation analysis systems.
>
> Teacher self-appraisal should be the goal of efforts to evaluate teaching competency. Self-appraisal can be realized through the use of videotaping in the classroom or clinic. Clinical approaches—peer teaching and microteaching—offer the opportunity to try out new techniques and skills in a controlled learning situation.
>
> Personal and professional attributes are difficult to identify and evaluate. Agreement of the faculty on those personal and professional traits that should be evaluated is essential. Self-evaluation of personal and professional characteristics may be initiated by a review of the literature on personality development and by the use of selected personal attitude inventories.
>
> In addition to the teachers' appraisal of their own performance student and parental evaluations of instruction can aid teachers in

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[1] Peter F Oliva, Supervision for Today's Schools. Second edition. New York, Longmans, 1984, pages 481 and 482.

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analyzing their own behavior and making needed improvements.

Many school systems require supervisors to evaluate teachers periodically. The supervisor is advised to institute a goal-oriented evaluative process, whereby the supervisor and teacher agree on the teacher's job targets for the year, jointly monitor, and jointly evaluate. Though the supervisor may evaluate teachers, his or her primary role should be helping teachers to evaluate themselves. Changes in behavior, whether in instructional skills or in personal-professional attributes, can only come about if the teacher sees the need for change and agrees to try to improve.

Rewards for Administrators

There certainly are numerous methods available to reward school administrators. Governing boards of education and the administration within a school system need to appraise under which conditions administrators are motivated to do their best. To be sure, school administrators need to receive adequate renumeration for their services so that concern may be given to improve the school curriculum, rather than paying for the necessities of life. Increased pay for services performed should certainly assist administrators to become truly professional in their tasks, duties, and responsibilities. Beyond the concept of professional pay for administrators, there are additional motivators.

Certainly procedures can be found to utilize other reward systems for school administrators, in addition to salary. Which additional methods might be available? Administrators like praise for work performed in a professional manner. The following approaches may be used in emphasizing praise:

1. verbal statements, such as, "You're doing well in the area of school administration"; "the workshops in curriculum improvement have been excellent, according to teacher's evaluations."

2. printed newspaper accounts of specific administrative accomplishments.

3. announcements on television newscasts of achievement of school administrators. It is excellent to include achievements of students, teachers, and support service workers. This would be true of all media reports.

4. announcements at school assemblies as well as parent-teacher meetings of administrative accomplishments.

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Meeting achievement needs of school administrators then are significant to emphasize. A second dimension of rewarding administrators may well stress emphasizing affiliation needs. Too frequently, an administrator may feel that he/she does not belong ir the community of residence. Feelings of belonging might then not be in evidence. Governing boards of schools can assist administrators to develop the affective domain of being a member of a group. This can be done for new administrators of schools by:

1. having a list of reputable clubs and organizations to join and participate in.

2. presenting names of religious groups and denominations.

3. informing the Welcome Wagon (or similar organization) pertaining to new administrators that have come to the local community.

4. receptions for school administrators in school and in society.

There are selected administrators who will be more motivated in the area of achievement as compared to affiliation purposes. The opposite could also be true. Provision needs to be made for individual differences among school administrators. A significant issue then involves the degree to which achievement versus affiliation needs are salient to individual school administrators.

Morris and Pai[2] wrote:

> Much of human behavior is shaped through operant conditioning. But the ways in which operant responses are shaped in everyday life are slow and inefficient, mainly because reinforcements of these responses do not occur in either a regular or a uniform menner. Thus, if we are to be effective and efficient in shaping and maintaining desired responses, we must construct schedules of reinforcement. Such schedules are especially important in forming a complex behavior, which must be shaped gradually through selective reinforcement of certain responses but not others.
>
> The schedule in which reinforcement follows every response is called continuous reinforcement. This schedule is generally used in getting an organism to emit the desired response. But very rarely are we reinforced continuously. We do not win every time we play a game of chess, nor do we catch fish every time we go fishing. "The reinforcements characteristic of industry and education are almost always intermittent because it is not feasible to control behavior by reinforcing

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[2]Van Cleve Morris and Young Pai, Philosophy and the American School. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1976, pages 315 and 316.

every response." Hence, in intermittent reinforcements, only some of the responses are followed by reinforcing events. In this schedule the rate of responding is determined by the frequency of reinforcement. If we reinforce a response every two minutes, the response occurs more frequently than if reinforcements are presented every five minutes. Another kind of intermittent schedule is ratio reinforcement, in which the frequency of reinforcement depends on the rate at which operant responses are emitted. So, if we decide to reinforce every third response, it is called reinforcement at a fixed ratio. Students' receiving grades upon completion of a paper, a salesperson's selling on commission, and a worker's piecework pay are all examples of fixed ratio reinforcement. Of course, interval and ratio schedules can be combined so that responses can be strengthened according to the passage of time as well as the number of unreinforced responses emitted.

Ideographic versus Nomothetic Dimensions

School administrators face an issue of stressing the ideographic as compared to the nomothetic dimension in school organization. The ideographic facet stresses meeting personal needs of teachers. To meet personal needs of teachers, the following may be emphasized:

1. make efforts to personally greet and speak informally in a positive way to teachers.

2. praise teachers individually and in groups where rewards are done.

3. have an informal coffee for teachers prior to conducting workshops and faculty meetings.

4. emphasize in radio, television, and newspaper accounts, personal accomplishments of teachers.

5. stress teacher participation in determining agenda items for faculty meetings.

6. guide teachers to determine themes and problems to solve in workshops.

Thus, teachers and administrators have personal needs. A second dimension of needs emphasizes the nomothetic dimension. The goals of the institution represent the nomothetic emphasis. Objectives of schools may well be represented by the following:

1. pupils scoring on the fiftieth percentile or higher on standardized tests.

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2. all students achieving at least the minimal number of objectives on the local Instructional Management System (IMS) of instruction.

3. ten per cent fewer students who are tardy and absent this school year as compared to the past school year.

4. teachers spending two hours per week on inservice education to improve teaching skills.

5. each instructor spending one hour per week in making teaching aids to utilize in the classroom.

Meeting the needs of the institution or school could also pertain to:

1. developing criteria to use in selecting textbooks.

2. identifying and solving problems in discipline.

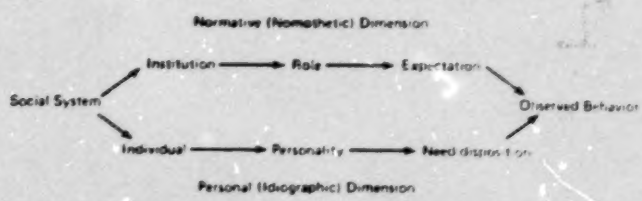
3. participating actively in faculty meetings.

4. being personally involved in teacher growth by participating in workshops.

5. visiting classrooms where teachers emphasize the concept of excellence in teaching.

Teachers and administrators have definite goals which must be met which are nomothetic or institutional in nature. An issue is involved as to how much of the ideographic (personal needs of participants) dimension as compared to the nomothetic (the school system) arena should be emphasized in developing the total person.

Roe and Drake[3] provide the following diagram and content on the ideographic and nomothetic dimensions:



A person within a social system such as the school makes a decision or performs an act (administrator, teacher, or student). Based on the

[3]William H. Roe and Thelbert L. Drake, The Principalship. New York: The Macmillan Publishing Company, 1980, page 36.

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Getzels Guba model, this act or action is conceived as deriving from both the normative and idiographic dimension. In other words, one may say that behavior in the school is a function of the role the school expects of the person and his/her personality as defined by a needs disposition.

While this model has provided a useful way of analyzing the particular behavior of an administrator, teacher, or student, unless carefully explained it is in itself too simplistic. The assumption is too often made when considering the normative or nomothetic dimension that only one institution, the school, influences the role. Thus, it becomes a static rather than dynamic situation. The fact is, for any given person many institutions of which he/she is a part of at that particular time, influences role—the church, political party, the social club, ethnic group, the communities, the professional organizations. Influence on behavior is dynamic and ever changing.

The same may be said for the idiographic dimension. This is often seen as a static condition of personality based upon past experiences and influences. These influences are of major importance. However, present-day influences (friends, accidents, unusual experiences, and so on) of the moment may change personality and behavior drastically at any given time.

Theory Versus Practice

Administrators in their professional training and education on the college/university level experience theory and practice in school administration. Numerous theories are then studied and analyzed. An entire graduate program in school administration could emphasize theoretical foundations. Thus, a prospective administrator may in depth study the thinking of selected theoreticians in professional education.

Behaviorism has contributed much in the field of school administration. Concepts in behaviorism that are salient include shaping, successive approximations, reward, reinforcement, contigency, conditioning, aversive control, observable results, stimulus, response, and Management By Objectives (MBO).

Gestaltists emphasize patterns, insight, wholeness of the situation, problem solving, valence, configuration, and system theory as viable concepts.

Humanists have advocated concepts such as meeting physiological, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization needs of individuals. Additional concepts include choices and decision-making, feelings, personal, intrinsic motivation, uniqueness, and humane.

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Much emphasis in graduate programs in school adminstration then could be placed upon a study of theory and how it relates to the work of the school administrator.

The concept of practice in the curriculum for school administrators could receive tremendous emphasis. The following would stress practical situations:

1. doing an extensive intership with the guidance of a competent administrator in the public schools.

2. engaging in field experiences in several school settings to compare roles of different administrators.

3. writing a master's thesis, or doctoral dissertation based upon observing specific facets of administrative work. The traditional parts of a research paper may be emphasized in developing the dissertation.

Each of the above practical experiences of the involved student may well be supervised by a college/university professor in school administration.

Thus, an issue exists pertaining to the degree theory as compared to practice being emphasized in the masters or doctoral degrees in school administration.

Kimbrough and Nunnery[4] wrote:

> Theory serves the scholar and practitioner in at least four ways. One function of theory is taxonomic, another is explanatory, a third is predictive, and a fourth is heuristic.
>
> To say that theory has a taxonomic function is to say that theory provides a framework or classification scheme that enables the user to "fit" what is observed or known about a particular group of events. For example, some of the earlier "theories" of educational administration focused on the task areas of educational administration (e.g., curriculum, personnel, facilities, evaluation). If one were studying the use of time by administrators occupying different posts some such scheme would be useful in organizing the numerous descrete observations so that meaningful conclusions could be drawn from the data. (One of the more frequent criticisms of many "theories of educational administration" is that they are merely classification schemes and are useful only as taxonomies).
>
> Theory also provides explanations for possible relationships among events (e.g., cause and effect, concomitant variation). For example, assume that while studying a number of different school organizations, the researcher notes that there is considerable commonality within each organization relative to the level of involvement by members of the

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[4]Ralph B. Kimbrough and Michael Y. Nunnery, Education Administration. Second Edition. New York: Macmillan Publishers, Inc. 1983, pages 243 and 244.

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organization. However, among the organizations the level of involvement ranges from a negative orientation to great commitment. Using Etzioni's theory of compliance relationships, the differences between the organizations might be explained in terms of the dominant mode of power utilized within a given organization.

Closely related to the explanatory function of theory is the predictive function. To illustrate, let us continue with the compliance relationships. Assume that in repeated researches it has been demonstrated that in organizations where the dominant kind of power exercised is coercive, the orientation of most of its members toward the organization is negative. Such a generalization would provide a base from which to predict the kind of power exercised in an organization if the level of involvement by the members was known or vice versa.

As a theory gives rise to derivations—which enable one to describe, explain, and/or predict—the formulations may be found inadequate in any number of ways. Thus theory points the way for further problem solving (further discovery) and eventually perhaps to refined theory. This is the heuristic function, providing a conceptual framework for further discovery and refinement. Said another way, theory provides a base for further research and the extension of the state of knowledge.

School Administration: Art Versus Science

An artists' work emphasizes creativity. There are no specific patterns, rules, and goals to follow. To be sure, there are broad, flexible standards in terms of what is artistic. Novelty and uniqueness in processes and products are an end result. The educators emphasizing that school administration is an art believe that creativity needs to be in evidence rather continuously to perform well. Administrators have numerous roles to emphasize. Old solutions to new problems generally do not work. Rather, open-ended problems are faced requiring unique answers. Perhaps, one can think of flexibility as a concept in solving problematic situations. Thus, a delimma is faced in the school setting. No clear cut answers are available. The tried and the true does not work. Any problem area requires creative solutions.

There are numerous problem areas which do not have absolute answers. these include:

1. how specific discipline problems should be solved.
2. which objectives students need to attain.
3. what learning activities to select to guide students in achieving chosen objectives.

4. how learner achievement is to be appraised.

5. which method(s) of curriculum organization should be utilized.

6. what approach should be used to determine scope and sequence in the curriculum.

The role of the administrator may also be perceived as a science. Science emphasizes objectivity, empiricism, objective truth, and replication of research findings in testing hypotheses and results from other studies.

Administration as a science would advocate the following:

1. using research results from studies emphasizing rigorous controls in the experimental and control group.

2. adopting an Instructional Measurement System of teaching in which the objectives are precise, clear, and measurable.

3. emphasizing Management By Objectives (MBO) in administering the involved school(s).

4. utilizing measurable and demonstrable results, rather than what is subjective and internal to the learner or the school system.

School administration as a science emphasizes a managerial role for the administrator. The manager works in the direction of achieving clearly stated objectives. The measurable goals are developed initially or prior to any other administrative procedure. Next, faculty, staff, and support workers are mobilized to achieve the precise ends. They have been involved in establishing the predetermined objectives. With the guidance of the administrator, school personnel are heavily involved in moving toward attaining the precise ends.

Periodically, checks need to be made to see that means utilized are on track to achieve objectives. Program Evaluation Review Technique (PERT) is used in ascertaining if corrections need to be made to determine success in goal attainment.

An issue then is in evidence as to the degree administrative works in a school should be an art versus a science.

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Merit Pay Versus Cooperative Agreement on Salary

How should administrators of schools be paid for their services? There are specialists in the field of administration who would recommend merit pay. A school administrator would then be paid on the basis of quality or lack of it in administering the educational enterprise. The more productive the services, the higher would be the salary paid. Unsuccessful administrators might then be weeded out. A market place economy would result. Administrators who perform well would receive excellent remuneration. Those who achieve ineffectively would not receive enough pay to stay in the field of school administration.

Administrators being paid on the basis of merit, no doubt, would work harder to be more productive. These individuals might become more proficient in:

1. developing a quality curriculum for students.
2. staff development to increase teaching effectiveness.
3. working with parents to guide the latter in helping their children achieve more optimally.
4. implementing a quality program of public relations with the lay public.
5. maintaining school buildings and the school grounds to optimalize student safety and health.
6. working to increase salaries of teachers and school support workers.
7. hiring quality teachers, supervisors, lunchroom workers, custodians, bus drivers, and other school workers.

To implement the merit pay concept, quality evaluators need to be in the offing to evaluate the merits of each school administrator. Excellent, observable criteria need to be in evidence. Subjectivity, friendship, nepotism, and politics need to be omitted in the appraisal procedures.

Toward the other end of the continuum, educational specialists would recommend cooperative agreement between the involved administrator and the

governing board of the school pertaining to the salary of administrators of schools. Motivation on the part of the administrator to improve the curriculum may well come about due to increased salary. Perhaps, cooperative agreement on salary might increase purpose on the part of school administrators equal to that of merit pay. Cooperative agreement as a concept could have the following advantages:

1. threats would be minimized to an administrator's security to attain specific objectives over which he/she has little control.

2. broad general goals would be emphasized in administrative progress. Specific objectives (MBO) are difficult to agree upon as well as specify.

3. goals change in time and space. Flexible objectives then can be in the offing with cooperative agreement rather than MBO which has predetermined goals for a new school year.

4. subjectivity is involved in appraising administrators for merit pay. Subjective factors are equally involved in cooperative agreement pertaining to salary arrangements for administrators. Perhaps, objectivity is lacking no matter which method.

An issue then is involved in how administrators should be remunerated for professional services performed. Should salary be based on merit pay or cooperative agreement between administrators and governing boards?

Fairman and Clark[5] wrote:

> Research studies by George Weber, Wilbur Brookover, Ron Edmonds, and Benjamin Bloom have identified a common set of characteristics that tend to be present in high achieving schools. In an article by Michael Cohen, differences in effectiveness among schools, defined in terms of student performance on tests of basic skills, can be accounted for by the following factors:
>
> 1. Strong administrative leadership by the school principal, especially in regard to instructional matters;
>
> 2. A school climate conducive to learning; i.e., a safe and orderly school free of discipline and vandalism problems;
>
> 3. Schoolwide emphasis on basic skills instruction, which entails agreement among the professional staff that instruction in the basic skills in the primary goal of the school;

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[5]Marvin Fairman and Elizabeth Clark, "Moving Toward Excellence: A Model to Increase Student Productivity", National Association Secondary School Principals, January, 1985, pages 6 and 7.

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4. Teacher expectations that students can reach high levels of achievement, regardless of pupil background; and

5. A system for monitoring and assessing pupil performance that is tied to instructional objectives.

The prominence of leadership in these studies suggests that the very foundation of productive and effective schools is the leadership ability of the principal. The essence of leadership is the ability of the leader to accomplish organizational goals through his or her efforts and through the efforts of other organizational members.

Traits versus Functional Situations of Administrators

How should administrators be appraised? An older school of thought emphasized listing vital traits of administrators and then appraising administrative achievement based on the identified traits. Commonly listed traits included honesty, morality, courage, persistence, humor, knowledgeable, and cooperative. It was believed that administrators possessing these traits would be effective individuals in administering the school. However, a problem that existed pertained to how agreed upon traits would fit into specific functional situations involving the school administrator. When the noble characteristics are needed, are they useful within the school setting?

A modern theory of administration stresses the importance of the work of the administrator within a problematic situation, a problem or problems that need solving involving the educational arena. The success or lack of it depends upon how well administrators do in the following areas, as examples:

1. improving the curriculum so each student may achieve as optimally as possible.

2. developing a climate for learning, free from discipline problems, conducive to learner growth.

3. having a school which is funded adequately to provide for needs of instruction of students, salaries of teachers as well as for administering the school.

4. guiding parents to have an interest in helping children do well in school.

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5. emphasizing a quality public relations program based on truth and communication.

6. providing a healthful, safe school environment.

Instead of evaluating administrators then in possessing selected traits, today's emphasis stresses the administrator being involved in developing quality education for all students. The above six enumerated items appraise administrators in terms of functioning effectively within the school(s) and educational arenas.

A third means of appraising administrative efficiency pertains to the philosophy inherent in Management By Objectives (MBO). With the utilization of MBO, faculty members and support service workers, with administration leadership, identify vital goals for the school system to achieve for the ensuing year(s). Whatever is identified as goals are then stated in measurable terms. Thus, it can be measured if an objective is/is not being achieved as the school year progresses. Periodic checks are made throughout the year(s) to notice if the school system is on course in meeting the precise objectives. If objectives are not being attained, school personnel and the administrator need to ascertain reasons for the occurances.

A school administrator then would be appraised in terms of guiding faculty and support service workers in achieving measurable objectives. The criteria for appraisal are objective. The ends are clearly stated, not hazy or nebulous. Motivation for the administrator involves achieving objectives, precise and specific.

Oliva[6] wrote:

> The literature on supervision is remarkably silent on what personal characteristics are necessary for successful supervisory behavior. Perhaps this silence can be attributed to one or more of the following reasons.

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[6]Peter F. Oliva, Supervision for Today's Schools. New York: Longmans, 1984, pages 20 and 21.

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1. Personal characteristics can be inferred from the skills supervisors should possess. Thus, if supervisors are expected to demonstrate a high degree of skill in human or interpersonal relations, they should exhibit human and humane traits like empathy, warmth, and sincerity.

2. Educational research has been notably unsuccessful in identifying personal qualities which are common to all successful administrators and supervisors. The presence of generally valued personal traits in a leader does not guarantee success on the job nor does the absence of these traits assure failure. Since the search for universal traits has been unproductive, the experts have concentrated on the more certain requisite knowledge and skills.

3. Personal traits necessary for success in positions of leadership appear so obvious that they need no elaboration. Some specialists in the field may feel that a compendium of supervisory traits is on the order of the oath which Boy Scouts take, promising to be trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, etc.

4. The search for personal traits is a somewhat dated activity in a time when researchers are attempting to identify competencies which school personnel should demonstrate. Nevertheless, in spite of these encumbrances I believe we should at least briefly consider the question of personal characteristics needed by supervisory personnel. Robert C. McKean and H. H. Mills deemed the following personal characteristics essential to fulfillment of the role of supervisor:

1. ability to win respect and confidence
2. empathy and sensitivity
3. enthusiasm
4. feeling of adequacy
5. originality
6. sense of humor
7. sincerity
8. resourcefulness

In Conclusion

Numerous issues need resolving in school administration. These issues include:

1. diverse means of appraising teacher performance.

2. approaches in rewarding principals and supervisors.

3. ideographic versus nomothetic dimensions.

4. theory as compared to practice in graduate programs of school administration.

5. art versus science roles of administrators.

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6. merit pay as compared to cooperative agreement on salary of principals and supervisors.

7. traits versus functional situations in assessing school administrators.

Research studies need to be made pertaining to each of the above named issues. Ultimately, an increased number of synthesis of the pros and cons of each issue should be a relevant end result.

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